

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4213

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0876

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, AG, RQ

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: ALGERIAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO

REF: (A) STATE 074904, (B) 75 ALGIERS 3036 (NOTAL)

1. DURING COURSE OF TOUR D'HORIZON WITH FOREIGN
MINISTRY POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR AND NUMBER THREE
MAN ABDELMAJID ADJALI, I RAISED QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO AT
NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT SUMMIT. I SAID WE ASSUMED THAT NAM, IN ITS
VARIOUS MEETINGS THIS SUMMER, WOULD BE DEALING WITH WIDE RANGE
OF ISSUES AND THAT PUERTO RICO WOULD BE SUBJECT OF
DISCUSSION. THIS WAS QUESTION WHICH U.S. TOOK VERY SERIOUSLY.
WE CONSIDERED DISCUSSION OF IT BY GROUPS SUCH AS
NAM AS INTERFERENCE IN U.S. INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
U.S. COMMITTED TO POLICY OF PERMITTING SELF-DETERMINATION
IF MAJORITY OF PUERTO RICANS WANTED IT. LATER HAD BEEN
GIVEN AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE, FIRST IN APPROVING
CONSTITUTION AND THEN IN 1967 PLEBISCITE. INDEPENDENCE
OPTION HAD RECEIVED APPROXIMATELY ONE PER CENT OF POPULAR VOTE
IN LATTER YEAR. ONLY REAL ISSUE SEEMED TO BE WHETHER TERRI-
TORY SHOULD REMAIN COMMONWEALTH OR BECOME STATE WITHIN U.S.
ROUGHLY TWO-THIRDS OF PEOPLE HAD CHOSEN FORMER OPTION. SO-
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CALLED NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT WAS PHANTOM ORGANIZATION
ERECTED BY CUBANS LAST AUGUST. I CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT

PUERTO RICO WAS NOT ISSUE OF GREAT DIRECT INTEREST TO ALGERIANS AND URGED THEM NOT TO BE MILITANT ON THIS QUESTION IN NAM FORA. I REFERRED TO CASTRO'S VISIT AND USGGESTED THAT ALGERIANS SHOULD DISTINGUISH THEIR INTERESTS FROM HIS.

2. IN RESPONSE, ADJALI MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO HAD BEEN BEFORE VARIOUS NAM BODIES FOR SOME TIME AND PUERTO RICAN SOCIALIST PARTY ENJOYED NAM STATUS AS RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. (I INJECTED THAT SOCIALISTS HAD RECEIVED TOTAL OF FOUR PER CENT OF VOTES IN LAST ELECTIONS.) IF IT WERE NEW QUESTION WAY MIGHT BE FOUND TO GET AROUND ACTIVE CONSIDERATION OF IT IN NAM FORUM. IT WAS OLD QUESTION, HOWEVER, AND WAS INEVITABLY ON AGENDA. HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF NLM.

(B) ALTHOUGH ALGERIA MIGHT NOT BE HIGHLY INTERESTED IN PUERTO RICO PER SE, PRINCIPLE OF SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WAS IMPORTANT AND WOULD BE UPHELD BY ALGERIANS AT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. THOSE FAMILIAR WITH ALGERIANS KNEW HOW THEY INSISTED ON SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES, EVEN WHEN AGAINST THEIR INTERESTS. THEY WOULD HAVE TO VOTE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION.

3. I SAID WE REALIZED THAT ALGERIANS MUST VOTE FOR THEIR PRINCIPLES AND WITH THEIR FRIENDS. ALL WE ASKED WAS THAT THEY NOT TAKE A LEADING ROLE ON THIS ISSUE, THAT THEY LET SOMEONE ELSE CARRY THE FLAG. ADJALI TOOK NOTE.

4. COMMENT: ADJALI WAS FRIENDLY AND FORTHCOMING, BUT UNLIKE FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL BENHABYLES REPORTED 75 ALGIERS 3036 (NOTAL), HE MADE NO EFFORT TO DOWNPLAY ISSUE. REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER OUR REPRESENTATIONS HAVE ANY EFFECT. WILL CONTINUE REMIND ALGERIANS THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR US.PARKER

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